

THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A soya extract having a content of glucoside isoflavones of at least 13% by weight and a content of 0.6 to 1.5 parts by weight of group 3 soya saponins per 1 part by weight of glucoside isoflavones.
2. The soya extract of Claim 1, wherein the content of group B soya saponins is 1 part by weight per 1 part by weight of glucoside isoflavones.
3. A pharmaceutical composition containing, as an active component, the soya extract of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.
4. A pharmaceutical composition containing, as an active component, the soya extract of claim 2 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.
5. A method of treating pre- or post-menopausal symptoms in a female subject which comprises administering to a female subject in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of the soya extract of claim 1.
6. A method of treating pre- or post-menopausal symptoms in a female subject which comprises administering to

a female subject in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of the soya extract of claim 2.

7. A method of treating cancer in a subject which comprises administering to a subject in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of the soya extract of claim 1.

8. A method of treating cancer in a subject which comprises administering to a subject in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of the soya extract of claim 2.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein the subject is a female and the cancer is breast cancer.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the subject is a female and the cancer is breast cancer.

11. The method of claim 7 wherein the subject is a male and the cancer is prostate cancer.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein the subject is a male and the cancer is prostate cancer.

13. A method of treating alcoholism in a subject which comprises administering to a subject in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of the soya extract of claim 1.

14. A method of treating alcoholism in a subject which comprises administering to a subject in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of the soya extract of claim 2.

15. A process for producing a soya extract having a content of glucoside isoflavones of at least 13% by weight and a content of 0.6 to 1.5 parts by weight of group 3 soya saponins per 1 part by weight of glucoside isoflavones, which comprises the following steps:

treating ripe whole soya beans or oil-free soya flour with an aliphatic alcohol to obtain a first extract;

concentrating the first extract to form a concentrated first extract;

purifying the concentrated first extract by treatment with at least one aliphatic hydrocarbon; and

extracting active components from the purified concentrated first extract with a water-immiscible aliphatic alcohol to obtain a second extract.

16. The process of claim 15 which further comprises concentrating the second extract followed by drying to form the desired soya extract.

17. The process of claim 15 which further comprises adsorbing the second extract from the concentrated first extract to a polystyrene-based adsorption resin, flushing the resin with water, and eluting the second extract with ethanol.

18. The process of claim 15 which further comprises;
suspending the first extract in a mixture of a
water-miscible alcohol and water and diluting it with a water-
immiscible aphotic solvent;
heating the resulting mixture to complete
dissolution and then holding it at room temperature to allow
precipitation of group B soya saponins in a solution that
contains an organic phase and an aqueous phase;
collecting the precipitated group B soya saponins by
filtration of the solution;
separating the organic phase from the water phase,
and then concentrating the organic phase and drying it to
produce isoflavone components; and
mixing the collected group B soya saponins with the
isoflavone components to form the desired soya extract.

19. The process of claim 1, wherein the content of group
B soya saponins in the extract is adjusted to be 1 part by
weight per 1 part by weight of glucoside isoflavones.